Rome 11th Nov. 1873

My dear Charley

I am in too serious a vein to write you in Italian in answer to your admirable letter but it shall be in another letter

Your fd Revd T. Turner I was much pleased with altho I only saw him once when he called on me & we were seperated by the heaviest rain I ever saw & the Tiber overflowing – Also I had had an attack of fever, tho' slight it kept me in bed 5 days, but I am quite well again & even strong but very idle, you'll call it repose as on the 7th December next I shall be 80 & tho' weak at times particularly in the damp weather and places, yet I contrive to hold my own very well & but no doubt I do well to look seriously on the future & prepare & anticipate my last days, sooner or later & this I do cheerfully & with resignation, having I think fulfilled a long & busy life always blessed by a merciful Providence even to the beholding all my dear children happy & well doing

My excellent Doctor Valeriani assures me that I have an excellent constitution, that may endure for many years, but this does not

me to be careless of the future — I suffer from cold & damp & am afraid that I shall never again have the journey to England "come off" altho I am always picking up & may possibly some day pick up London & see you all again.

You'll be glad to know that I am very comfortable & well taken care of — I go out & walk almost every day for 1 or two hours, often getting a cab.

I have often thought of you in the brilliant days I read about in the music world but I fear your life must be very laborious & I hope you get a holiday now & then & that your harmony is never turned into discord.

How happy I feel when I think that we have all lived in love & peace & never attempted to tear each other to pieces, such as I see about me in families — My dear Father had many fine qualities, his love for me & the pride he took in me I can never forget, my mother was an Angel & how we all escaped the dangerous intercourse of Masons Court is come a wonder, but it must have been the goodness of our parents

All encouragement of Painting seems to have come to an end & what should I have done without my pensions, scanty as they are (£140) yet my few wants are well provided for here & in that sum

2

I find myself better off that with the income of £500 for I had many serious expenses & heavy responsibilities — 'Tis singular that now I get few or no visitors, true my Consulate being over my country people seem to forget that I am an Artist & still at work - perhaps I have lived too long & the world has been some time getting rid of me, but withall I can depend on myself my adventurous life gives me ~~given me~~ food for the mind & I plod on pleasantly & have not done with myself yet — The private theatre in my house is very admirably built & the performance take place every week — the Romans are excellent actors and really excell the professionals at times

Nov. 17 to order

I am about a bit of Sculpture a medallion portrait of myself in marble life size for my tomb - I have from time to time had portraits of my deceased friends done for the Roman Cemetery & I there see my friends in marble when I go; but as ~~Harold~~ my fr are all gone & I am left alone as the only Anglo Roman so I must put myself in marble resemblance to be associated with them when the time comes & I dont know that I may be so fortunate as to have

any one to do this kind office so I do it myself, no doubt you'll think me an old fellow as I always was & that I am writing you a rigmarole all about myself

Greatly it pleases me to sit down in my large magnificent room with all my things about me for 'tis what I have always desired & at last I have my wish, one ample room to contain all my wants This room is 60 feet from corner to corner

Nov. 24 I have pitched into my painting lustily with the energy of the old times, but 'tis strange to me doing all for myself, thinking only of myself, how odd!!

Our very fine weather continues, with a degree of warmth even too great for walking - Yesterday I was on foot 3 hours in the ruins of the Palace of the Caesars now excavated & abounding with marbles statues, busts & pavements of mosaic - All the trees are retained

Nov 30 As I fear that I cannot show myself to you in person on account of the cold; so I now try to show myself in writing as I know how you all like to hear about me

With love to all, particularly your wife & Maria

I am always your loving brother

Joe

by my very old friends who chance to come to
Rome by whom I am still taken for my Son &
they enquire about my father the P.R. of Keats!!
and some I think dont believe in me, but alas!
most of my dear old friends are no more &
can enumerate some & all gone! - so but few
be excellent friends P. Valeriani & his ladies I
should be lonely & dull - you have the advantage
of me as you are in the midst of those dear girls
your nieces - I have but few friends, but enough
as I am not equal to many or much - The present
race of artists who come to Rome are a very
inferior race to those I remember, but as the
encouragement of Art has nearly come to an end
so the Artistic visitors are coming to an end also
the Arts altogether have sadly gone down with the
political disturbances
I am so pleased to find I can write so well
perhaps even better than ever
your loving brother Joe